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JOINT OFFICE: Viale delle Terme di Caracalla 00100 ROME Tel: 39 06 57051 www.codexalimentarius.net Email: codex@fao.org Facsimile: 39 06 5705 4593

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HARMONIZATION AND COOPERATION IN FOOD LEGISLATION AND FOOD CONTROL ACTIVITIES IN THE REGION

1) Updated survey of national food control authorities

CZECH REPUBLIC

Official control of foodstuffs in the Czech Republic is organized by the Ministry of Agriculture (State Veterinary Administration - SVA, Czech Agriculture and Foodstuffs Inspection - CAFI) and by the Ministry of Health (Hygiene Service - HS). The structure of the food control is following:

System of Food Control	
Producers	Government
Internal Quality Control	Official Food Control Agencies
	<i>Czech Agriculture and Foodstuffs Inspection</i> <i>State Veterinary Administration</i>
System of critical control points (HACCP)	<i>Hygiene Service</i>

The system reflects the fact that responsibility for food safety was moved from state to producers/importers. The state has changed its control activity and now requires higher responsibility of producers. So called self-control of producers is performed as internal quality controls and systems of critical points in foodstuffs production and processing (HACCP). The HACCP system is supported as an important tool for assertion of hygiene in production of foods. Many private firms are working in the area of implementation of HACCP now. The crucial point is education of producers. For example: two training centers, working under supervision of The Ministry of Agriculture, were established at the Faculty of Food Technology of the Institute of Chemical Technology in Prague and at The Veterinary University in Brno. These two centers have already trained several hundreds of specialists in the field of HACCP. The Ministry has also issued several model systems of HACCP aimed at particular branches of foodstuffs production and processing. Training in the above-mentioned centers is followed by certification of personnel (Certificate of Critical Points System Manager) for certification of which the certification body is the Czech Society for Quality, which was accredited by the Czech Institute for Accreditation according to CSN EN 45 013.

Legislative basis for HACCP implementation constitutes, besides Act 110/1997 Coll., Decree No. 147/1998 Coll. on critical points in food production, which represents partial harmonization with Directive 93/43/EEC on food hygiene. The Decree sets out the task of food producers to determine critical control points in their technology and after validation to adjust their system in such a way, that it complies with requirements of the Decree.

The three food control agencies have powers endowed by the Act on Foodstuffs and Tobacco Products and by several other acts. In order to make the food control system more efficient, all the three agencies cooperate together in preparation of a state food control conception and unify food control practices with the aim of future bringing of the level of the food control to the level appropriate to EU Member States. In practice both agricultural and health sectors are responsible for an agreement, which was closed to facilitate cooperation in food surveillance. This Agreement describes duties of inspection services, mainly the duty to interchange information in order to protect public from food-borne diseases, and specially interchange information about outbreaks of food-borne diseases and about penalization of producers or importers. The Hygiene Service is responsible for solving all cases of serious outbreaks including investigation of sources of the diseases concerned. It is very important that similar agreements exist at the central level and at the local levels as well. That is an advantage for planning inspection activities, consultations and data interchange and it helps to improve the quality and coverage of the food control in the Czech Republic.

Conception and realization of the food control are consistent with principles set out in Directive of the Council No. 89/379/EEC on the official control of foodstuffs. The official control bodies regularly work out annual check plans which are based on risk assessment while especially these factors are taken into account: toxicological effects of certain contaminants, consumption patterns, amount of production, failures formerly found. Risk assessment also takes into account geographical origin of foodstuffs and many other factors. Besides planned checks there are also random checks and also checks which are carried out on the basis of impulses coming from consumers, mass-media etc. or these checks react to serious defects found during planned checks or during monitoring.

General division of food control activities in the Czech Republic is following:

Division of Food Control Activities:

Production and Processing of Foodstuffs

Foodstuffs of animal origin - *Veterinary Administrative authorities*
Foodstuffs of plant origin - *Czech Agriculture and Foodstuffs Inspection*

Market

Places where meat, milk, fish, poultry or eggs are processed and game is sold.

Open market places where foodstuffs of animal origin are sold
- *Veterinary Administrative authorities*

Other places - *Czech Agriculture and Foodstuffs Inspection*

Supervision over epidemiologically hazardous groups of foodstuffs and mass catering services

- *Health Service bodies*

POLAND

I. FOOD CONTROL SYSTEM

The supervision of food production, processing and distribution in Poland, and especially of food quality is based on two main control systems:

the system of internal control conducted in the productions area, depending on the producer. Presently in many cases this system is based on the Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP). System of quality assurance in accordance with ISO series 9000 standards and the Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point System (HACCP) is used to be more important issue in this matter.

➤ the system of external control independent of the producer which is carried out by specialised state control services.

Presently, the project of the regulation of the Minister of Health is being prepared which obliges the producer to carry out internal control based on risk evaluation and on HACCP system in food production. The obligation to use the HACCP system has been entered into force in Poland for the production of dietetic food, in accordance with a relevant regulation of August 22, 1996 concerning the details of the production and marketing of dietetic food products, stimulants intended for dietetic purposes and special food (Offic. J. No108, pos.520 with later amendments). In the developing system of market-oriented economy, the producer is responsible for the quality of the produced food and he is most interested in its proper quality and compliance with declarations on product's label.

The statutory supervision on the quality of food in Poland is conducted by the following bodies:

- *Sanitary Inspection,*
- *Veterinary Inspection,*
- *State Inspection of Purchase and Processing of Agricultural Products,* (Polish abb. ISiPAR)
- *Agricultural and Food Quality Inspection,* (Polish abb. CIS)
- *Inspection of Plant Protection,* (Polish abb. WIOR)
- *Trade Inspection,*

The Constitution of the Republic of Poland states that:

- Everybody has the right to health protection (Article 68 1)
- Public authorities protect consumers, users and tenants against the actions endangering their health, privacy and safety and against dishonest market practices.

The main legal document in Poland regulating problems of food and nutrition is the Law of 25 November, 1970 (with later amendments), on the health conditions of foodstuffs and nutrition which sets down the conditions of food and stimulants production and the turnover of these commodities in the range indispensable for public health protection. It also regulates the requirements concerning production equipment, machines, instruments, packaging and other materials which are in direct contact with food products and stimulants during production and distribution. The Law contains also general provisions concerning, supervision and penalties. In the light of this act the supervision of the health quality of food and stimulants and maintenance of proper sanitary conditions in the production and distribution is the responsibility of the authorities of Sanitary Inspection and Veterinary Inspection. The first one subordinated to the Minister of Health and the latter to the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development. At the present moment the work is being continued on the revision of the mentioned above Law. This new act will delegate, to the relevant ministers, the right to issue appropriate executive decrees, harmonised with EU requirements.

II.FOOD CONTROL ELEMENTS

- 1. Legislation (see below)**
- 2. Structure and Functions of the Food Control Services**

2.1 Structure of the official Food Control System

Ministries involved in food control:

- Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
- Ministry of Health
- Ministry of Environment

Agencies involved in food control at state level:

- Sanitary Inspection, subordinated to Ministry of Health
- Veterinary Inspection, subordinated to Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
- Trade Inspection, subordinated to Office for Competition and Consumer Protection
- State Inspection of Purchase and Processing of Agricultural Products, subordinated Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development

- Agricultural and Food Quality Inspection, subordinated to Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development

- Inspection of Plant Protection, subordinated to Ministry of Agriculture Rural Development.

2.2 Inspection units and inspection programmes at domestic level

- The task of Sanitary Inspection is the supervision of:
 - the health quality of food products and stimulants as Polish as imported,
 - keeping up the adequate sanitary conditions in the production and distribution of these commodities (with the exception of food products of animal origin),
 - food and nutrition hygiene,
 - environmental hygiene,
 - working place conditions.
- The tasks of Veterinary Inspection include supervision of:
 - the health quality of food products of animal origin (including the supervision of sanitary conditions of obtaining, production and storage),
 - the turnover of pharmaceuticals and medical materials intended only for animals,
 - the health of animals intended for reproduction purposes and the quality of biological material,
 - moreover examine of animals before slaughtering and meat after that.
- The main task of Trade Inspection is protection of the interests of consumers in a wide meaning. The supervision of food quality is a part of its activities. Trade Inspection supervises:
 - the quality of goods on the internal market (national level),
 - trading units, gastronomy and service institutions,
 - observation of obligatory rules, concerning trade within the country,
 - quality and safety of goods and services, in particular those which may endanger the life or health of consumers.
- The scope of the activities of State Inspection of Purchase and Processing of Agricultural Products includes:
 - control of the obligatory standards and regulations in the area of purchase of all raw materials and agricultural products intended for consumption (with the exception of the fish and herbs), their sales, transport, processing and storage,
 - control of the obligatory standards and regulations and expertise of quality, with the exception of the health quality of: raw materials and products for consumption, food articles and their concentrates, fodder, equipment for agricultural and food production,
 - collecting information and carrying out analyses on Polish market situations in agricultural and foodstuffs area, providing opinions on these situation for agricultural policy and gathering of data on prices of non-processed agricultural plant products as well as articles of animal origin and technical production means,
 - attesting storehouses with respect to storing of rape-seed and cereal grains purchased from Polish producers for the use by Polish food producers or pharmaceutical firms, and for supplying the Polish market,
 - works within the framework of the governmental programme: Monitoring of the Quality of Soil, Plants, Agricultural and Food Products.
- The tasks of the Agricultural and Food Quality Inspection are:
 - supervising quality of imported and exported food products and certifying their compliance with national and international standards and regulations. The Minister's of Agriculture and Food Economy Decree of July 28, 1999 (Offic. J. No 65, pos.745) contains the list of products (fresh and processed fruit and vegetables, dairy products, meat, fishes, cereals and others) and their minimum quantities which are subject to the official control carried out by CIS,
 - co-operation with international organisations, foreign bodies and institutions as concerns quality control, quality standards and standardization of agricultural food products:
 - Codex Alimentarius Contact Point,
 - Economic Commission for Europe (Working Party for Standardization of Perishable Produce)
 - advising exporters how to adjust their products to the requirements of importing countries and avoid

technical barriers to trade.

- The tasks of Inspection of Plant Protection are a comprehensive supervision of cultivated plants protection for instant it phytosanitary control of plants and means for their transport at state border checkpoints and places of custom clearance within the country.

2.3 Import/ export inspection system.

- Sanitary Inspection – health food quality (with the exception of food products of animal origin);
- Veterinary Inspection – health food quality food products of animal origin);
- Inspection of Plant Protection – in case of food export the province IOR inspectors give phytosanitary certificates (certificate form is compatible with the pattern accepted by FAO and standards of the International Convention of Plant Protection). These certificates are recognised by all states in the world. The border points of province plant protection inspectors decide about further management of imported goods, that is send them for custom clearance or return them back to the country of origin;
- Agricultural and Food Quality Inspection – commercial food quality. In export inspectors of CIS are authorised to clear food for shipment abroad to disqualify them when they do not comply with international standards or general law. CIS control is aimed to inspect quality of presented commodities and to issue official documents describing quality and compliance with relevant standards and regulations.

There are relevant methods of inspection for imported foodstuffs and another procedures appropriated for exported products. Inspectors of CIS are authorised to issue according to certain procedures:

- export quality certificates
- import quality certificates

2.4 Certification authority/ accrediting agency, (see also Annex I).

Polish Centre for Testing and Certification (Polish abb. PCBC) does not provide official food control but supervises issuing certificates for food and agricultural products in unregulated area.

Polish Centre for Testing and Certification is subordinate to the minister responsible for economy. Its function is based on the Law of April 3, 1993 on testing and certification (Offic.J.No 55,pos. 250 with later amendments) till December 31, 2002. The new Law on consistence system, accreditation and changes in some laws will be obligatory since January 1, 2001.

The task of PCBC includes:

- organisation and supervision of the system of testing and certification,
- accreditation of testing laboratories and certification units,
- certification of quality systems ISO 9000, ISO 14000,
- certification of auditors and leading auditors,
- organization of training and skill upgrading courses for staff for needs of testing and certification
- certification of products on consistence with PN and Q sign.

SLOVAK REPUBLIC

Food legislation

Slovak Food Codex Committee (SFCC) was established with the decision of the Slovak Government Nr. 325 in May 1996. The SFCC represents a supreme body deciding on national food legislation priorities as well as on harmonization to the Codex Alimentarius and European Union legislation. Individual chapters of the Slovak Food Codex are created on contractual basis, objected by experts, producers and designed authorities. Final versions are submitted to the Legislative Council of the SR Government for approval.

Food control

In accordance with the Food Act (No. 152/1995), food control activities are shared by two Ministries:

1. Ministry of Agriculture supervises food control provided by the State Veterinary Administration (SVA) and by the Slovak Agriculture and Food Inspection (SAFI).
 - The SVA is responsible for sanitary and quality control in slaughterhouses, transport and distribution network and control of foodstuffs of animal origin in the market-shopping network.
 - The SAFI guarantees quality control of agriculture products and foodstuffs of plant origin.
2. Ministry of Health supervises food control and issues permissions for marketing all new food products

from the viewpoint of health safety. The Ministry guarantees quality control of baby food, waters (baby water and mineral waters), food for special dietary uses, ices, and delicacies. It is also responsible for quality inspection in restaurants, canteens, hospitals and nurseries.

In addition, Slovak Inspection of Commerce (under Ministry of Economy) provides inspections of domestic fair trade practices (including foodstuffs).

An extensive programme aimed at food chain contamination monitoring is run from 1991 planned and financed by the Ministry of Agriculture. A support AQA Project is run simultaneously. The results of monitoring and of food inspection, while respecting the AQA results), are processed by the Data Centre. Food contamination is monitored continuously and the data are summarised twice a year and assessed by the Interdepartmental Commission (directly linked to the SFCC). Specific feedbacks are undertaken, to prevent consequences of potential risks.

Import/Export Matters

Exchange of information on import/export matters relating to food safety and quality:

- Bilaterally exchange of information on veterinary requirements for import of foodstuffs and animal products as well as on forms of required certificates, actual legislative provisions, and veterinary controls at import/export of animal products
- Inspections and audits of the EU veterinary expert in plants which were approved to provide export in the EU member countries. Information on results of veterinary drugs residues controlled in accordance with plans and the legislation of the EU
- Exchange of information on animal infection occurrence related to import licensing of animal products (O. I. E. system)
- Submission of the USDA- FSIS questionnaires and starting of the equivalency process for eligibility of SR to export meat products in the U. S. A.
- Exchange of information between Slovak Republic and the individual CEFTA countries (especially Hungary, Poland, and Czech Republic) if any import/export problems occurred.

2) Food Legislation

CZECH REPUBLIC

Since 1998 the Czech Republic has made a significant advance in the field of food legislation. This advance represents transposition of most of the EU food legislation into the Czech food law. Basic law, which is Act 110/1997 Coll on Foodstuffs and Tobacco Products, was amended (the amendment will come into force on 1. January 2001) and most of the decrees relating to the above-mentioned Act were amended as well, transposing many EU regulations and directives. The Czech Republic is now working on amendments to decrees No 336/1997 Coll. on foodstuffs for particular nutritional uses, No 324/1997 Coll. on food labelling and No 327/1997 Coll. on meat, meat products, fish, other aquatic animals and eggs. After amending these provisions the Czech Republic will have its food law almost completely compatible with that of the EU. Certain exceptions, which will exist, will be caused mostly by new development in the EU food legislation that the CR will have to transpose or by minor issues requiring some transitional periods to allow adaptation of producers, processors and sellers to new requirements.

POLAND

1.1 Basic Food Law

- The Law of November 25, 1970 on the health conditions of foodstuffs and nutrition (Offic.J.No 29, pos.245 with later amendments)

1.2 Laws, Acts, Orders governing to the food control system

- The Law of March 14, 1985 on Sanitary Inspection (Offic.J.No 90, pos.575 with later amendments)
- Minister's of Health Decree of December 2, 1997 on territorial scope of activities and inspectors seats (Offic.J.No 154, pos.755)
- The Law of April 24, 1997 on control animal infections diseases, examinations of animals full slaughter

- and meat and on the veterinary inspection (Offic.J.No 60, pos.369)
- Minister's of Agriculture Decree of December 10,1997 on the borders, where veterinary inspection is being made (Offic.J.No 150, pos.996)
- Minister's of Agriculture Decree of December 10, 1997 on seats and territorial scope of activities veterinary doctors (Offic.J.No 150, pos. 997)
- The Law of June 30, 1970 on Inspection of Procurement and Processing of Agricultural Articles (Offic.J.No 16,pos.137)
- The Ordinance of the Cabinet of December 13, 1991 on the extension of the activities of the State Inspection of Purchase and Processing of Agricultural Products (Offic.J.No 157, pos.1031)
- The Law of February 25, 1958 on Trade Inspection (Offic.J.No 26, pos.206)
- The Law of September 12, 1996 on the State standardization supervision of agricultural and food products in the international trade (Offic.J.No 124, pos.584)

1.3 Food standards

- Polish Standardization Committee (Polish abb. PKN) is the institution dealing with normalization /function based on the Law of April 3, 1993 on standardization (Offic.J.No 55,pos. 251 with later changes)/
The Polish Standardization Committee is responsible for working out, acceptance, setting down and publication of standards. These standards set down on the basis of EN and ISO standards. In the process of elaboration of Polish Standards participate representatives of industry the, pertinent ministries and official food control services as well as scientists.

1.4 General regulations

Pre-market approval, permits, licensing, registration of foodstuffs establishment

- Minister's of Agriculture Decree of 29 September,1999 on the Polish standards scheduled to obligatory use (Offic.J. No 88, pos.989)
- The Law of April 3,1993 on Standardization (Offic.J. No 55, pos.251)
- The Law of April 3,1993 on testing and certification (Offic.J. No 55, pos. 250)
- The Law of February 25, 1958 on Trade Inspection (Offic.J.No 26, pos.206)
- Minister's of Health Decree of December 17, 1973 on Permission for production, distribution and import from abroad some foods.

Food import/export regulations

- The Law of September 12, 1996 on the State standardization supervision of agricultural and food products in the international trade (Offic.J.No 124, pos.584)

Food Hygiene

- Minister's of Health Decree of August 22, 1996 on details of the production and marketing of dietetic food products, stimulants intended for dietetic purposes and special food (Offic. J. No108, pos.520 with later amendments)
- Minister's of Health Decree of August 14, 1997 on qualifications on hygiene of people involved in production, trade or storage of food, stimulants and food additives (Offic.J.No 105, pos.670)
- Minister's of Health of May 22, 1996 on general conditions in transport of food, stimulants and food additives (Offic.J. No 64, pos.313)
- Minister's of Health Decree of February 28, 2000 on Sanitary conditions and hygiene in production and trade of stimulants and food additives (Offic.J. No 30, pos. 377)

Food Labelling

- Minister's of Agriculture Decree of July 15, 1994 on labelling of food products, stimulants and permitted additives intended for trade turnover (Offic.J. No 86, pos.402 with later amendments)
- Minister's of Environment Decree of October 8, 1999 on the genetically modified organisms (Offic.J. No 86,pos. 962)

Food Additives

- Minister's of Health Decree of March 31, 1993 on food additives and technical contaminants in food and condiments (Offic.J. No 22, pos. 233). Already has been prepared proposed draft decree concerning food additives, microbiological and chemical contaminants, which is in 90% in accordance with

Directives of UE.

Food contaminants: Chemical, biological, microbiological

- Minister's of Health Decree of April 15, 1997 on maximum limits of chemical residues in food, used in growing, protection, storage and transport of plants (Offic.J. No 43, pos. 273)

Street foods

- Minister's of Industry and Trade of October 25, 1994 on Sanitary requirements in street trade of food and condiments.

At present food legislation is being changed in order to bring it in line with the obligatory European directives and regulations (the basis is White Paper).

Draft of the food legislation foresees carrying out inspection of commercial food quality and the supervision of food production, processing and distribution.

It is being leading the adjustment the Polish food law to the requirements of the EU in this area.

SLOVAK REPUBLIC

Basic environment for production of foodstuffs, their distribution and handling to protect and support health of people in accordance with principles of consumer protection is created with a food control and inspection system by means of two essential acts - the Food Act No. 152/1995 and the Public Health Protection Act No. 272/1994 of the Digest. Both they, together with executive food regulations involved in the Slovak Food Codex, define individual horizontal and vertical requirements on food in details within the entire complex, from production, through packaging, labelling and sale provisions to consumers. In accordance with the WTO requirements the Act No. 264/1999 on Technical Requirements for Products and Conformity Assessment entered into force in January 2000, changing the previous global philosophy of market protection, while the product inspection was shifted from the control before placement in the market to the direct control at the market. In addition to the mentioned acts and regulations, also some other acts and directions influence quality of food, such as the defined provisions of phytosanitary and veterinary protection, provisions of wine and spirit production, or provisions in metrology, testing and standardisation. The Food Act No. 152/1995 represents a legal framework for gradual adoption of individual Food Codex chapters. All chapters of a horizontal character and a whole range of vertical chapters have already been approved. The other ones are being examined under adoption process. The SR Food Codex is to be completed till the end of 2000. The SR Food Codex chapters replace the previous National standards related to foodstuffs.

Many specialists are involved in Food Codex preparing. In the elaboration process, harmonization with both, the Codex Alimentarius and the EU, is watched. The Codex standards and guidelines are widely utilized. Before adoption of individual chapters of the Food Codex, a process of evaluation takes place, while consumer positions are respected.

3) Cooperation activities in food control and training

CZECH REPUBLIC

Food control bodies established in the Czech Republic systematically develop cooperation with food control bodies of other countries (e.g. France, the Netherlands, Sweden, Hungary, USA), represent the Czech Republic in several international organizations and participate in international conferences and seminars. Cooperation with food control bodies of other countries is a very important activity, since it not only helps introduce other control systems to the personnel but also supplements the system of their education based on courses and seminars, which is well organized. For example, members of the Czech Agriculture and Foodstuffs Inspection's staff took part in 91 external or internal educational courses in 1999, spending there 3,4 day on average. In the future the food control bodies will participate in activities relating to the area of international exchange of information via the Internet and in international conferences such as meeting of the Codex Committees. They will also work on developing further cooperation with other countries and on improving and modernizing their laboratories.

SLOVAK REPUBLIC

1. The FAO Project on strengthening food control TCP/SLO/8921 is being run in the Slovak Republic. A training workshop aimed at adjustment of testing methods used by inspection laboratories to the requirements of Codex Alimentarius will be held at the end of this year. Quality managers of food inspection laboratories will participate at the workshop.

2. Based on bilateral basis, an expert of the SR, as an FAO consultant, took part at two FAO projects on Strengthening the food control system:

TCP/ROM/6611, Romania - Bucharest 1996; The consultancy was oriented at establishment the Food Codex National Committee. A workshop on related issues was organized and experience shared.

TCP/MOL/8921, Moldova, Chisinau 2000; The consultancy was aimed at establishment of maximum permissible limits for contaminants, additives and residues in food. A workshop on related issues was organized and 8 lectures presented by the consultant.

At present, other experts are prepared to join similar FAO projects.

3. SUBREGIONAL TECHNICAL COOPERATION NETWORK ON FOOD COMPOSITION represents a meaningful support for nutrition modelling as well as for food labelling legislation. The CEECFOODS network on food composition has been established as a result of joint FAO – COST Action 99/EUROFOODS activity. Background for this activity was given at the joint FAO/Food Research Institute (FRI) MEETING ON FOOD COMPOSITION ACTIVITIES IN EASTERN EUROPE, 1995 Modra, Slovakia in which 13 CEE countries took part. Participants of the meeting recommended establishment of the sub-regional network on food composition. Two years later FAO/FAO SEUR WORKSHOP ON THE CREATION OF A SUB-REGIONAL TECHNICAL COOPERATION NETWORK ON FOOD COMPOSITION IN CEE (CEECFOODS), 1997, was held in Budapest, Hungary. During the workshop the subregional technical cooperation network on food composition for Central and Eastern European countries (CEECFOODS) was established.

National coordinators from CEECFOODS member countries are members of the Steering Committee. FRI Bratislava, Slovakia serves as the CEECFOODS data centre. The individual countries will share data on foods for inclusion in each database. The FRI Bratislava, Slovakia served also as the initial subregional coordinating centre of the CEECFOODS network. Since the roll of coordinator is a rotating function, Poland guarantees that activity this time.

At the end of 1998 the Slovak Republic organized the First CEECFOODS Course on the Use of the Data Management Software and nutritional software ALIMENTA, which was developed at the Food Research Institute, Bratislava. Both softwares served as working tools for 10 countries participated at the 1st CEECFOODS training course. Users checked them and sent their comments, suggestions and ideas to the CEECFOODS Data Base Centre (FRI, Bratislava, Slovakia). Consequently, upgraded versions of both softwares are prepared. At the end of November 1999 the 2nd CEECFOODS Training Course was held in FRI Bratislava.

Important contribution to cooperation activities will be the 4th World Conference on Food Databases, which is to be held in the Slovak Republic in 2001.